The quiet revolution: how anchor organisations in North America and Australia are using their economic power to build wealth and tackle disadvantage in local communities.

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Introduction, methodology and itinerary

This research was inspired by the work of a group of anchor organisations in Cleveland over 15 years ago. Cleveland had fallen down the tables of America's biggest cities from 6th to 50th in under a century. A city built for a population of 1 million now housed just 375,000. As late as the 1960s Cleveland's employment base had been in steel, manufacturing and banking, whereas in 2010 the two biggest employers were both hospitals, which between them spent $3 billion a year on goods and services and employed over 50,000 people.[i] Together, they were a significant economic presence in Cleveland. Meanwhile, the city's population experienced growing health inequalities and Cleveland's African American residents were more disadvantaged than any other group on a range of indicators, including birth outcomes, childhood poverty, income, health outcomes and incarceration levels. These two world leading health systems – the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals, were surrounded by neighbourhoods experiencing acute urban poverty, boarded up housing and poor transport links.

Bought together by the Cleveland Foundation, the city's major anchor institutions began a conversation about what role they could play in revitalising the local economy and supporting the communities they were based in. The Cleveland Foundation, University Hospitals, the Cleveland Clinic and Case Western Reserve University, together with local partners, have since undergone an impressive range of collaborative initiatives and investments to try and improve their impact on the city and its residents. Their work has ranged from incubating and setting up worker owned co-operatives to significant physical regeneration and capital investment, new policies to increase the proportion of their workforce from the local community, and initiatives to shift more of their spending into locally owned businesses. They organised their collaborative goals around four clear objectives: to buy, hire and live locally, and to connect.[ii]

Fifteen years on and Cleveland is still cited as one of the leading pioneers in the community wealth building movement that has now spread across North America, and beyond. Two thirds of America's cities have a hospital or university as their biggest employer: the theory of community wealth building asks what role these organisations – alongside other anchors - can play in the economic development of the communities and places they are based in.

I wanted to visit some of these cities and try and understand what strategies they were using to answer this question, to hear the stories of those involved and see what impact they had been able to have. With the generous support of the Rank Foundation and the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust I was able to spend seven weeks doing just that. Back in the UK I have been working with charitable trusts and anchor organisations from a range of sectors to share the learning and support their application of much of this thinking.

Methodology

The research is based on a literature review of published and unpublished material on anchor institutions, and interviews with over thirty-five organisations across North America, Australia and the U.K. The interviews were recorded in notes, and then analysed for common themes and points of learning. Many organisations that I visited were kind enough to share follow on literature, including grey literature such as slide decks they had produced to share their insights, data they had

collected on their impact, and internal impact reports. These data formed part of my analysis as I began writing up the findings.

Itinerary

This research took me to ten cities across North America and Australia in a little over seven weeks.

In Toronto I visited the Atkinson Foundation, which has led city wide efforts to develop a collective anchor approach to social procurement. I also spent time with a collaborative of anchors in East Toronto including the University, National Park and the Zoo, who have been working together to improve the impact they have on the local population.

In Boston I visited Partners' Health, the Boston Children's Hospital and the Boston Medical Centre who are all working on trying to reduce health inequalities in the City by tackling the social and economic determinants of health – with a particular focus on jobs, food and housing.

In Cleveland I spent almost a week hearing from some of the leading pioneers of community wealth building, including University Hospitals, the Cleveland Clinic, the Cleveland Foundation, Evergreen Co-operatives, and the Democracy Collaborative. I also met many of their partners, including NewBridge College and University Circle, which helped shine a light on how other place-based partners work closely with anchor organisations.

In San Francisco and Oakland, I visited Kaiser Permanente and Dignity Health – two of the largest health systems in the U.S., both of which have led pioneering work as Anchor organisations in their own ways.

In LA I visited Cal State University, which has won awards for its work with the local community.

In New Orleans I was lucky to spend time with the Good Work Network, an organisation working with anchors to help strengthen recruitment from the city's African American population, and some of the staff who formerly worked on the Mayor's Anchor Taskforce.

In Washington I spent time with the Democracy Collaborative hearing about their Health Anchor Network, and with the Centre for Community Investment which has been bringing together social investors with anchors to build local infrastructure – with a particular focus on housing.

In New York I met with David Maurasse, an academic who has led much of the thinking on how U.S Universities can work with the communities they are based in.

A second leg of research took me to Brisbane and Melbourne, where I spent time with Universities and community foundations who have been re-focusing their work on the local population and some of the environmental and social issues they face.

Upon returning home to London, I've been lucky to benefit from follow on conversations with people both abroad and in the UK and have been enthused at how much potential for this learning and research to be applied in practice.

Executive Summary

The role of 'place' has become an increasing subject of interest for those who seeking to tackle economic disadvantage. Geography is something people often identify with, whether that is the road they live on, their neighbourhood or city. The concept of community wealth building has explored the opportunities for place-based economic development, and the role of anchor organisations within that. Anchor organisations are the large, usually not for profit, organisations that are significant actors in the local economy: examples include hospitals, universities, local authorities, transport providers, museums and community foundations. They are often the biggest employers and spenders in that place, as well as owning significant physical assets and having a reach and influence that few other institutions can match. The scale and durability of anchor institutions means that, with the right level of intentionality and a place-based economic development strategy, they can use their very presence in an area as a direct economic intervention.

This research explored and documented the main strategies that anchor institutions in North America and Australia are using to create place-based change. Five clear strategies emerged which capture how anchor institutions are intentionally directing their economic power towards better social, economic and environmental outcomes in the communities they are based in. These five strategies are:

Spending: considering how every dollar which is spent by the organisation could be used to create opportunities in the local economy.

Employment: considering how all aspects of HR, from recruitment and retention to internal progression pathways and external partnerships, could be used to benefit the local community, particularly those groups that are most disadvantaged or furthest away from the labour market.

Investment: aligning financial investments, including things such as banking, endowments, pensions and other investments with social, economic and environmental objectives for the place that the anchor is based in.

Place-making: using infrastructure investment for new developments and existing physical assets to benefit the local community.

Community Partnerships: using the assets of the anchor organisation to benefit the local community, by working in partnership, developing capacity and supporting civic action.

This isn't always easy. As one of the interviewees from Boston said:

> *''The intentionality that you need to apply to creating a new economic model for local communities is a big deal''*. Megan Sandel, The Boston Medical Centre

What counts as an Anchor institution?

The term 'anchor' institution refers to a specific type of organisation that is rooted in place and has a significant role in the local economy. They are typically – though not exclusively – not for profit organisations that are based in a city or town and are unlikely to move location, usually because their purpose and mission is intrinsically bound up in that area. Examples could include [Manchester University](), Bristol Children's hospital, the [Museum of London](), Leeds football club or Glasgow airport. These organisations are unlikely to take flight if another city offers lower corporation tax or higher levels of productivity. They're 'anchored' in these geographies and often act in service to the local community. In many cases their mission is bound to the wellbeing of the communities they are rooted in: a hospital that seeks to respond to, and reduce, ill health, or a local council that wants to tackle poverty. They often own and operate land and physical assets in the place too, and this, combined with the services they often provide to the local area, mean they are stable economic actors, with very low incentives to move.

Anchor organisations are also often one of the major employers and spenders in the local economy and can use this unique economic power to create wealth and improve opportunities for the people in that place. They have major economic levers at their disposal, such as their expenditure on goods and services, the number of people they employ and their investment portfolios, all which can have an impact on the local economy if they use them more intentionally to benefit the communities they are based in.

Given the scale of anchor organisations, just switching on the lights and opening their offices in the morning has the potential to benefit the local community, though it will often involve different departments to those providing front line services. The so called 'back office' functions of finance, procurement, HR, facilities and estates take on a central role in tackling the mission that the front-line services are often trying to achieve. Steve Standley, the Chief Administrative Officer for University Hospitals in Cleveland explained:

> ''My budget for charity is $2 million, but if I can build co-operatives [like Evergreen] into my spending model than that's achieving the same benefits, but it comes out of the core budget''.

The core operating budgets of anchor organisations are substantial and are separate to their budgets for front line delivery of services, but – the community wealth building theory would suggest – can contribute towards those same outcomes.

There is some debate about whether private sector organisations count as an anchor organisation. Certainly, many private sector institutions have significant economic reach and are rooted in place – sometimes for many decades. There are examples, such as Prudential in Newark, of private sector organisations taking a leading role in local community wealth building efforts. Some of those interviewed through this research argued that private sector organisations didn't have the same long term incentives to stay rooted in that place, nor did they share the same core mission as anchor organisations, which can make it harder for them to privilege outcomes other than the bottom line.

But most agreed that, particularly for partnerships of anchor organisations, private sector partners were an important group to have aligned with the partnership.

Better together: what is an anchor collaborative?

Some parts of North America have begun to develop anchor collaboratives. These are place-based partnerships involving a range of local anchors which come together to enable collaboration and increase their collective economic impact in that place. They are often organised around a collective vision for the local area and may also collaborate around more detailed objectives to achieve benefits for either people, or place. This might be particular groups – such as young people – or particularly deprived neighbourhoods, often down to a specific zip code.   One example of an anchor collaborative is the Newark Anchor Collaborative which brings together Newark's city government, universities and colleges, health providers, arts centres, charitable foundations and corporate partners who are all committed to improving life for people living in Newark.[iii] They have set three strategic priorities for their work in the city: economic development, workforce and anchor collaboration. They have also developed a 'Live Local' scheme for employees which offers financial allowances to eligible staff to renovate their homes in specific local areas.

Anchor collaboratives can take many forms, from those which have explicit governance arrangements and collective objectives to those which are more informal and meet to share learning. They are often supported by a trusted independent organisation that helps to facilitate the work, and in North America this role has typically funded by a philanthropic partner. In the U.S., the role played by the independent partner is often referred to as a 'backbone' organisation.

The potential benefits of such collaboration are substantial. Some of the most common strategies that Anchor organisations use to build wealth in the local community (such as hiring and procurement) have much greater potential to benefit the local community when deployed at scale. For example, several local Anchors may identify a gap in local service provision – such as a healthy and locally produced food supply. One solution may be to incubate and support a local employee owned supplier to develop, but this is much more likely to succeed if the supplier can secure contract with a range of Anchor institutions, rather than one, and the risk is reduced for the anchors. In Cleveland, Ohio, a number of Anchor organisations have collectively invested in funding and contracting a worker owned co-operative – Evergreen co-ops – which is now supplying a range of services, including laundry and solar, to anchors organisations in Cleveland as well as the wider economy. One Anchor alone wouldn't have benefited from this investment, but collectively their support for Evergreen means they now have a locally owned, environmentally sustainable, laundry service as part of their local supplier base.

Anchor organisations can also benefit from 'doing things once' in a place, rather than duplicating efforts if they work together. For example, the data that anchors will use about a local area or engaging the community to develop a collective vision about the priority projects and activities anchor organisations might pursue only needs to be collated and analysed once. Likewise, anchors will often benefit from investing in demand led training for roles that they might recruit to together, such as health and care assistants that might work across health and social care providers.

Across North America there are a growing number of anchor collaboratives, all of which have a unique local focus to their work. In Cleveland the anchors that are part of the Greater University

Circle Initiative have worked together on incubating and spinning out local social enterprises, encouraging local recruitment and partnering with Cleveland's colleges to invest in pre-employment work. In Rochester, New York, the city has launched 'OWN Rochester', a non-profit co-operative business development corporation and local Anchors are working to create jobs that meet anchor demand and benefit local communities.[iv] The [Baltimore Integration Partnership](#) is another example of anchor organisations within a city that have focused on improving economic inclusion through their procurement practice, employment and property investment.[v] Other examples include the Memphis Medical District Collaborative, the Tacoma Anchor Collaborative, and the DC Community Anchor Partnership.

Strategies for change

Anchor organisations have initiated a wide range of activities under the banner of community wealth building, and they are as varied as the organisations themselves, and the communities they serve. What unites them is the type of assets that they leverage to benefit the community, and the departments that deliver them within an anchor organisation.

The typology of anchor strategies below groups the five most common 'strategies' into: spending; employment and skills; civic action and community engagement; investment; place-making. Each of these strategies is explained in more detail below, though many of them can be combined – as some of the case studies will show. By far the two biggest levers most anchor organisations have are the money that they spend – and the ripple effect of that through the supply chain, and the people that they employ. These are also the two most common strategies used by most anchor organisations.

Spending

An anchor organisation's spending is one of its biggest enablers in building community wealth. Using this lever more intentionally has the potential to shift wealth into goods and services provided by local businesses, which are in turn more likely to spend this income on local employment, goods and services. Most anchor organisations have sizable expenditure budgets which are spent on a range of goods and services, anything from their catering contracts to pens, pencils and lightbulbs. For a big anchor organisation, such as a hospital, this amount can run into billions.

Many anchor organisations start by mapping their current spending, and analysing this by a variety of factors, including how much of it is spent with organisations that are based within a defined local area. Some also analyse how much of this spend is 'movable' and how much is 'fixed' in order to begin planning how they might shift their spending to have greater local economic impact. Spending might be 'fixed' if it is tied up in long term contracts, or if it is buying very specific goods which are only produced outside of the local area – such as specialised medical or IT equipment.

Many goods and services will be 'movable', most frequently construction, facilities services such as cleaning or catering, printing, advertising or graphic design, and some renewable energy services. In order to use this strategy most effectively, anchors deep a deep understanding of their local economy, and who or where they want to benefit from the re-deployment of their spending. If the anchor is being led by a desire to improve economic outcomes for low income women – for example – they need to know what type of skills and organisations those women are currently in, and then work to build the capacity and engagement with that sector to ensure they are better represented in the anchor's contracted suppliers. Or, if their desire is to re-direct spending into a specific local area, then they need a nuanced understanding of that local area's economy: the skills that the people living there have, the businesses they own and run, and their aspirations and opportunities for growth.

To affect a shift in their spending anchor organisations will often do a combination of the following things:

- Begin to build relationships with a more diverse range of local suppliers, often starting with a focus on one sector where there is an upcoming opportunity (e.g. catering);
- Identify and reduce the barriers to small suppliers engaging with their procurement systems;
- Ask their existing large contractors to consider how to engage local businesses and workers;
- Consider establishing not for profit alternatives where there is a gap in the market, often in the form of a social enterprise or not for profit.

Many anchor organisations set targets to increase the amount of money that is spent locally, or on specific types of organisations such as SMEs, and monitor the change in their expenditure year on year.

Some cities in North America have benefited from having strong local intermediary organisations that act as a relationship broker between the anchor organisation and small local suppliers. For example, the Good Work Network in New Orleans organises networking and speed dating events between the city's anchor organisation procurement teams and local suppliers. In Chicago, CASE (Chicago Anchors for a Strong Economy) connects small to medium sized organisations to the city's anchors. They also offer services to anchor organisations to help them analyse their spend and what they might be able to shift into the local economy. In Boston, Ujima – a local economic development organisation – has been working with the city's food producers and catering suppliers to help get them 'anchor ready' and scale up their operations so they can compete with other suppliers to provide services in local clinics and hospitals.

Some anchor organisations have taken an even more active role in how they direct their spending to benefit the local economy by working with philanthropists and social investors to incubating and establishing not for profit suppliers that can provide key goods and services. The Cleveland Evergreen Model was an example of this: the two hospital systems in Cleveland identified a challenge in their laundry contract, which was under-delivering and often seeing increased costs year on year. With investment from the Cleveland Foundation, the idea of a worker owned laundry co-operatives was scoped and initiated. Eight years later, the Evergreen co-operative has a laundry facility with contracts worth $15 million a year with the local hospital system; one of America's biggest urban greenhouses (Green City Growers) which is growing and supplying lettuce, basil and other vegetables; and a LED retrofitting service (Evergreen Energy Solutions) which has worked with many of the city's anchor organisations on improving the sustainability of their energy usage. The Everygreen co-operatives are now employs over 100 people, of which 60 are full co-operative members.

Procurement strategies often bring opportunities to promote local employment, a strategy discussed in more detail below. For example, when an anchor organisation is procuring a new contract, or more pro-actively developing other types of provision – such as a co-op, there is an opportunity to identify how this might also secure jobs for people living in the community.

Image 1: Green City Growers' greenhouse on the outskirts of Cleveland

Employment and skills

Anchor organisations are often the largest employers in a town, city or region. It is this scale which can make their approach to recruitment, skills development and progression within work a significant economic intervention in the local economy. In areas with high labour market inequalities their workforce strategies can help to narrow these by reducing barriers to entry, running open days, and investing in targeted pre-employment programmes.

As a starting point, many anchor organisations will analyse their current workforce data to look at what proportion of their staff live within a defined local area, and what pay bands they are on. Most anchor organisations interviewed through this research are seeking to increase the employment rate for local people, either directly within their workforce, or through their wider network of suppliers and contractors. They will often work with local educational partners, including schools, colleges, universities and providers working on skills and employment programmes in the local community.

Within this overall strategy of using the scale of an anchor organisation's workforce to better benefit the local community there are several sub-strategies.

Targeted direct local recruitment

Many anchor organisations in North America have changed their recruitment practice to try and reduce the barriers that local communities face in gaining employment with them. That might include advertising in local newspapers and working with dedicated local recruiters or changing requirements (such as a clean criminal record) that might prevent people applying for jobs.

The University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC), for example, have worked with their HR team to explore how they can diversify the pool of candidates they receive applications from to try and get more Scarborough applicants: their efforts have included posting job adverts in local places, giving people advance notice of recruitment drives and having Scarborough career fairs located in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Meanwhile, University Hospitals in Cleveland employs 8,000 people directly and has introduced two programmes designed to benefit local residents. The first, 'Step Up', targets recruitment activity in low income neighbourhoods surrounding the Greater University Circle, while their Pathways programmes are for existing employees and are designed to provide social mobility pathways into higher skilled, higher paid roles.

Targeted local recruitment through procurement

Procurement activities can also be an opportunity to encourage suppliers to employ local staff. For example, Cleveland, Detroit and Boston all have local hiring laws which enable the city to require contractors delivering project to hire local people. Until 2019 in Cleveland, the Fannie Lewis Law required contracts of over $100,000 to allocate 20 per cent of construction work hours to local residents or pay a fine. More recently this local law has been challenged in the Ohio Supreme Court by construction firms[vi]. Those organisations in states without local hiring laws have sometimes still encouraged their big suppliers to consider local employment, particularly for bigger contracts and many have had success with this. UTSC in Toronto started conversations with their major contractors about local employment and local sourcing, and their suppliers have been receptive to building this into the delivery of their work.

Bespoke pre-employment programmes

Some anchor organisations have worked with local schools, colleges and pre-employment providers to build a pipeline of local talent that they can tap into – so called ''demand led'' training programmes. This can include outreach work with local schools and colleges, job coaching and mentoring programmes, meet and greet days and paid internships for community residents. Among these offers, New Bridge College in Cleveland, has a well-established pre-employment training programme that is led by the demand for jobs that health anchors in the city are anticipating.

New Bridge College, Cleveland

In Cleveland the two hospitals have worked with local education leaders to invest $1 million each in a new programme to support local residents into pre-employment and technical skills programmes. This funding, together with donations from a local bank and the city's philanthropic foundation, helped to establish New Bridge college, a workforce training centre that engages and upskills residents of some of Cleveland's most disadvantaged communities. New Bridge prides itself on providing training for students which will place them in careers that are in high demand in the local economy. They work closely with the healthcare anchors in Cleveland to design programmes that are likely to lead to employment.

The average age of students at New Bridge is 29, and many have had high levels of positive drug testing before starting the programmes, which would have been a disqualifying factor for employment at most major organisations in the city. New Bridge work with students intensively before they start their training, and throughout it, helping them to complete qualifications in everything from phlebotomy to healthcare assistants. They also support them to write job applications and prepare for interviews: this additional wrap around support has pushed their job placement rate to 96 per cent.

New Bridge college work with Cleveland's health anchor organisations to identify roles that they are going to be recruiting more of in the medium to long term. For example, the Cleveland Clinic recruits 800 healthcare assistant roles per year, and at the moment New Bridge college train 100 of them. They also train phlebotomists, many of whom gain employment with the city's healthcare systems. Although the anchors will always need other recruitment pathways, the partnership with New Bridge enables them to target some of their recruitment at a local population who are likely to stay in the city, tackling some of the high attrition rates in entry level healthcare roles.

<u>Employee benefits</u>

Some anchor organisations have introduced new employee benefits to incentivise them to invest in, and be connected to, the local community. This ranges from providing a mix of repayable and non-repayable financing to rent or buy homes in specific local areas, incentives to buy from local shops and traders, and simple changes, such as opening up space for local farmers markets' on their property on certain days of the week. Some anchor organisations have also introduced progression pathways intended to benefit some of their employees who are on lower paid grades. For example, Rush University Medical Centre in Chicago has introduced two new pathways for existing staff: one of these was a medical assistant pathway for existing staff who wanted to move into this role, and they had 350 people applying for 30 spaces.

Meanwhile, the Boston Children's Hospital Trust offers English classes to staff, and the Cleveland Clinic has introduced a programme called 'Bridges out of Poverty' which helps staff with housing costs, which they know are a key driver of instability for their lower paid staff.

Investment

Anchor organisations often have significant financial assets, ranging from their pension funds to their investment portfolios and endowments. An increasing number have been re-deploying these assets to make more intentional investments in the communities they serve, and are based in. As an example, health systems in the U.S. have an estimated $400 billion in collective investment assets.[vii] If even a small percentage of this were re-directed towards local needs, it might be possibly to earn a healthy return on the investments and tackle the determinants of health and wellbeing more intentionally.[viii] This is an approach that the democracy collaborative calls ''place-based investing'' for anchor organisations.

The aim of this investing is varied and is often responding to local needs. That might be a shortage of housing that meets the needs of low-income communities, a lack of affordable finance for local social enterprises, or gaps in the infrastructure of local community organisations. The financial tools used by anchors have range from awarding grants to local community organisations, making social investments into capital infrastructure for social and community enterprises – or affordable housing, and offering low cost loans to local social enterprises. One example from Kaiser Permanente is set out below.

Kaiser Permanente's housing investments

Kaiser Permanente, which is headquartered in Oakland, California, has an impact investment strategy which is jointly led by their Treasury and Community Health Teams. Its aim is to put their assets to work towards their mission. Rachael Meirs, who oversees their economic opportunity strategy, explained that:

''The evidence around the social determinants of health is so clear that, frankly, if we're not investing in those determinants, then we're missing an opportunity to meet our mission on multiple levels''.

Kaiser has focused a lot on housing through their impact investment work, and this is an issue that is very specific to their local economy. Both Oakland and neighbouring San Francisco are experiencing a housing affordability crisis, and many of Kaiser's 10,000 employees live in and around Oakland and are directly affected by this as residents of the community. Kaiser started by developing a health and housing strategy that looked at homelessness prevention. Since then they have used some of their assets to invest in affordable housing units, parts of which is available for homeless people living in Oakland.

They have two funds which are powering their housing investments. A national debt fund, which is similar to a mortgage but on very favourable terms. Kaiser lend to developers who are developing multi-unit housing and purchasing and preserving existing housing as affordable housing They have also recently launched a Bay Area specific equity fund for down payments, which is focused on preservation (not purchase). The housing initiatives are very context specific and are rooted in what they have heard about housing challenges locally.

Beyond housing, health care anchors have also invested their assets in a range of other products which are intended to tackle some of the social, economic and environmental determinants of health. For example, ProMedica is headquartered in Toledo, Ohio, and has partnered with a local philanthropist to develop non clinical solutions to obesity, including establishing an education and training centre and building a sizable grocery store which provides low cost healthy food to residents.[ix]

The Gundersen Health System, headquartered in Wisconsin, invested 5 per cent of its long-term capital investments which would enable them to achieve full energy independence. This investment, worth $30 million, has enabled the building of two wind turbines, a biomass boiler, a geothermal gas pump and a number of other renewable energy sources, including solar and gas. Since being built in

2008, the rate of return on these investments have averaged at 10 – 12 per cent per year, in comparison to the 5.8% average which they have received through their stocks, bonds and cash investments[x].

Anchor organisations in the UK have also begun shifting their investments, although the scope of their funding is more limited, and very few have investment portfolios that are as expansive or as flexible as those of U.S. anchor organisations. In Preston, for example, the local authority is making a £100 million investment from its pension fund into local commercial schemes, including a new housing development into the city centre, meaning that it is re-directing more funding into the local economy.[xi] The focus on housing that many anchors have made through their investment work is closely related to the next strategy – the role of anchor organisations in place-making.

Place-making

'Place-making' is a term which refers to the role an anchor organisation has in shaping the places and spaces that make up the local area. This can be through investment in new developments, such as a new building or open space, or through better using their existing land and physical assets to benefit the local community.

There is some overlap with the strategies that anchor organisations employ for capital investment in new infrastructure: any investment in a new physical asset brings with it an opportunity to use the project to build wealth within the local community. This could be through engaging the local community in ensuring that the design of the building and its facilities meet their needs; ensuring the construction contracts bring employment opportunities for local people; building a diverse range of suppliers who can provide goods and services to the finished asset; using capital investment to incubate or grow local providers; and building partnerships with local organisations who might want to use or co-locate services within the space. Many anchors, particularly universities, hospitals and local authorities, are frequently involved in the development of new spaces and buildings within a local area, and also have an influence on private sector developers who are creating new physical spaces.

Even when an anchor isn't building new spaces there are opportunities to better utilise underused places and spaces that are owned or leased by anchor organisations for the benefit of the wider community.

For example, the anchor organisations that form part of Cleveland's Greater University Circle Initiative, including Case Western Reserve University, the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals and the local city Government came together to reimagine the physical development of a new health tech corridor in the city which included significant investment in cultural infrastructure. A new museum and art institute were part of the re-design of University Circle, as well as new transport routes and an education and training facility.

Many universities in North America have been at the centre of regeneration efforts in deprived urban areas, realising that the success of their institution is tied up with the vitality of the wider neighbourhood. Duke University in Durham found that their ability to attract and retain staff and students was affected by the decline of the City's fortunes in the 1980s, and sought to re-invent

itself, along with other local universities, as ''Medicine City'', inviting new capital investment that has seen the city transform into a hub of over 300 health related companies.[xii]

As a starting point, many anchor organisations map their current use of physical assets and land, and begin engaging with the community and local partners to explore how these are being used, and how they could be better used. Some anchor institutions have also mapped out their planning process and explored how this might need to better interface with other local partners to make the most of new capital investment and regeneration projects.

University of Toronto, Scarborough

The University of Toronto, Scarborough campus, is another University that has thought carefully about how their existing physical assets and new developments could be of greater benefit to the local community. They have the largest undeveloped land holdings of any Canadian University and are anticipating growth in their student population from 11,400 to over 15,000 within a decade.[xiii] They already have a large sports centre which has two Olympic sized pools, and this facility was a starting point in bringing the local community onto their campus.

They are now thinking about a range of other projects that will use their physical space in different ways to benefit the community. This includes the development of a 'First Nations House', which would be an academic building for the indigenous community on campus. They want the materials for this to be sourced locally and have focused on building relationships with suppliers of wood and other materials who are all based within 50km of campus. They are also building a new student residence project and have aspirations for this to be a high energy efficient building. To contribute towards this aim they want triple glazed windows and, although the technology exists, so far only European firms have been building these windows. As an example of how UTSC has used this capital investment to stimulate local economic development, they have been vocal about their ambitions for this investment some local suppliers have begun developing their expertise in this technology and are exploring partnerships with the leading European suppliers to deliver the contract.

Community Partnerships and Civic Action

Another important strategy that anchor organisations have used is to build new partnerships with the communities they serve in order to ensure that the work they do benefits the local community. This strategy has been applied in a wide range of ways and is often responding to specific local needs. For example, academics from the University of Melbourne, Victoria, have been working with local communities in rural Victoria who are facing significant water shortage challenges, to support their efforts to advocate to the federal government for more control over their local resources.

At UTSC, in Toronto, their Chief Administration Officer explained his thinking in one short sentence: "the community has a right to have expectations of us''. UTSC's head of community partnerships expanded on this, sharing their approach: ''most institutions seem to think they need to change policy, when in fact they need to change relationships. We have a strong community development approach rooted in the values of reciprocity''.

California State University – Los Angeles

California State University is based in South East Los Angeles in an area which was historically home to white working class communities and is now overwhelmingly Latino. Over 90 per cent of their students come from the surrounding community, and the University considers itself an integral partner in the local area. It has established deep and long-lasting relationships with community leaders and has launched a variety of initiatives to bring the University's assets to benefit the area, and the people living in it.

One of their biggest initiatives has been 'Civic U', which was developed in partnership with the Mayor of Los Angeles in 2013, to build the capacity of the community to take action on issues they care about, engage with public officials, and raise awareness of how to influence policy and politicians. The initiative, which is run by the University's public affairs institute, also does a lot of work with young people in local schools and colleges to get them engaged in civic action, and has run wide scale voter registration drives in its surrounding communities in recent years. They are also running a major polling project which will, for the first time, document the social and political orientation of Latinos in Los Angeles County.

Through this work they have thought carefully about the language they use. They don't use the term 'anchor institution', instead using the language of ''your university''. The location of their university, and the geographical boundaries of the majority of their students, who come from the surrounding neighbourhoods, have made it clear which communities they should be partnering with, but not all universities have such clear geographical boundaries.

The University is clear that it needs to be led by the community and has resisted going into discussions with community partners with a set agenda. When a professor is starting a new piece of research, for example, they are expected to meet with relevant community groups and partners. They have built community engagement into the performance evaluations of both the staff and the deans, and the leadership feel that this has made their civic engagement work much more central to their mission. (Photo, below: publicity for voter registration week at Cal State University).

Strategies for Change - Good, Better and Best

The table below sets out different activities that anchor organisations can do against each of the main strategies. They are mapped out to show the progression through good, to better and best – with 'best' usually being seen in the more mature anchor organisations and collaboratives.

Beneath each of the five strategies, there is a section on 'cross cutting' activities which many anchors have done but which don't sit within any of the five main strategies.

	Good	Better	Best
Employment and skills	Having baseline data on employees and the proportion of staff who live within the local area. Understanding local inequalities in the labour market Understanding the barriers that local residents face when applying for jobs and taking steps to overcome these. Encouraging employees to buy local goods and services	Medium to long term workforce strategy, with focused activities for the recruitment of local residents. Relationships with local schools and colleges and active engagement of the student population Collaboration with other anchors to identify areas for collective skills development and recruitment / progression with local residents Staff employment benefits that tackle wider determinants of health (e.g. affordable housing, food)	Social mobility / progression pathways for staff Bespoke training and recruitment run in partnership with local schools and colleges that is likely to meet in demand roles. Investment in pre-employment programmes and capacity building (collectively with other anchors if possible)
Spending	Baseline data on the proportion of expenditure that is spent within the 'local' economy A clear definition of 'local' Clear social, economic and environmental goals embedded in	Medium-long term procurement opportunities identified (3-5 years) Mapping context: awareness of local businesses and VCSE sector Social value / sustainable procurement policies	Capacity building for organisations not yet engaged with procurement team Incubating / spinning out community or worker owned provision Setting up own sustainable suppliers (e.g. renewable energy provision)

	policies

A social value procurement policy

Awareness of barriers that local suppliers may face in bidding for contracts | are specific to the local context

Active relationship building with new place-based suppliers

Set KPIs for existing contracts | |
| **Community Partnerships and Civic Action** | Established relationships with a wide range of local partners

Awareness of anchor's own assets and how these may be used to benefit the community | Responsive to local need and sets up systems to share organisational assets

Allocates core resource to community projects | Designs and develops programmes with local communities

Releases funding in addition to in kind expertise

Develops collaborative / shared governance arrangements |
| **Place-making** | Development of new facilities without displacement of local residents or community organisations

Opens up physical assets / facilities for local community | Any investment in new buildings / assets is targeted at the local community (contracts, employment etc) | Active and considered investment in physical regeneration

Investment in 'greening' physical assets and land / resources use. |
| **Investment** | Mapping current investment in place-based organisations

Understanding what financial needs the local economy may have (e.g. demand for low cost loans, social investment etc) | Offering a range of financial tools to local businesses and VCSE sector

Setting a target to move a proportion of financial assets into the local economy | Achieves targets to move a proportion of financial investment in place

Invests in incubating and supporting place-based start ups |
| **Cross cutting actions** | Capture baseline data and report on progress against targets

Publish anchor plans online and work with other local partners to find areas of alignment | Develop collaborative governance arrangements to support work across other anchor partners in the local area

Capture and share learning and examples of impact | Identify opportunities for collective investment with other anchor organisations |

	Appoint a senior internal sponsor		

Enabling factors: infrastructure and capacity building

Anchor institutions don't exist in a vacuum. They operate within a context – a community and a local economy – which has unique strengths, assets and development needs. In order for their strategies to be successful they need to develop quite a granular understanding of the people and organisations surrounding them. So, for example, if an anchor organisation decides that it wants new contracts to benefit local people and it identifies a particular opportunity coming up to re-procure its cleaning services contracts, that opportunity is no good if there are no organisations providing cleaning services within the local economy. The people and teams which hold knowledge about 'the community' are not always the same ones that have control over levers such as spending and employment, for example, and so finding ways in which to build understanding of, and engage with, local people and organisations is crucial. At the University of Melbourne civic engagement staff are supporting their procurement colleagues to meet community partners and stakeholders to start to build these crucial relationships. But this is relatively rare, and instead many anchor organisations have worked with intermediary organisations and community foundations to build local knowledge and broker relationships.

In many North American cities, intermediary organisations have been created to help realise the ambitions of anchor organisations by supporting local organisations to get 'anchor ready'. This might involve helping smaller organisations get set up on the procurement frameworks of large anchor institutions, growing their capacity to deliver at the scale that an anchor institution might need or expect or brokering partnerships between different kinds of place-based actors.

One example of this is CASE (Chicago Anchors for a Strong Economy). CASE supports entrepreneurs running small to medium sized businesses to work with anchor institutions in Chicago. They also work with the anchors to help them identify opportunities to shift more of their spending into the local economy. This support includes helping to analyse their spend, looking at both what they're spending and who they are spending it with and where these organisations are located. They can advise on what type of skills the local economy has and what might still need to be procured nationally or internationally. Increasingly, they are working with the anchors to set goals around what proportion of spend could be directed to local businesses. They also do a lot of co-ordination between anchor institutions to try and support collective work within the city.

The anchors pay $25,000 for a hiring and spend analysis and for $10k they get access to CASE's database of small organisations.[xiv] So far CASE has helped over 200 businesses to establish new contracts with Chicago's anchor institutions, creating over 180 new jobs and securing over $50 million in revenue committed to small businesses through multi-year Anchor contracts.[xv] Their approach is to build the capacity of small businesses to engage with anchor organisations and to direct this support to areas where they know – from the data – that anchor organisations are spending large sums of money. They support small businesses to access investment, collaborate and bid for projects with other providers, as well as access a range of technical assistance.

Meanwhile in New Orleans the Good Work Network runs supplier diversity events for some of the local anchor institutions, and does a lot of work to build the right networks and relationships which they feel lead to a more diverse range of suppliers from the local economy benefitting from anchor spend within the city.

Enabling factors: data and measurement

For many anchor organisations that set out to introduce new community wealth building strategies a key question they come across is what data to collect, and which indicators will help them show progress.

A common starting point is to capture baseline data on what the organisation already does to benefit its local community. This might involve analysing the amount that is spent with organisations based within a specific geography on goods and services; what proportion of the workforce is recruited from the local community; or the amount of funding that goes into local community based organisations through grants or social investment. This data is often easy to find and provides a useful starting point to ask further questions. It can help organisations to set targets to increase the impact they are having on these data – most commonly on the amount of expenditure which flows into the local economy, or the number of local people employed by the anchors. But there can be other objectives too which the anchors want to monitor, such as rates of crime, levels of voter registration, or external investment flowing into a town or city – for example.

Anchor organisations will then often look at the details beneath this: for procurement, they might explore which elements of their expenditure are 'moveable' and 'fixed'. Examples of movable spend are, most commonly found in areas such as construction, facilities, cleaning services, IT, food and some energy services.

For HR and workforce data, anchor organisations will often try to analyse their data by zip code (or post code) and also by protected characteristics such as ethnicity, age and gender. The aim is to build up a picture of what the current workforce looks like, and how far this reflects the inequalities in the local labour market. This data will then be used to target recruitment initiatives and form the basis of future anchor strategies. For example, in Wisconsin, the Gundersen Lutheran Health System set a goal to purchase 20 per cent of its food locally, and was a founding partner involved in establishing Fifth Season Cooperative, a co-op designed to bring a new economic model to food provision for local institutions in Wisconsin, in order to achieve that goal.[xvi]

Although expenditure and procurement are the two most significant areas where data is collected, and targets are set, other measurements can be used to track progress against less common anchor strategies. The University of Pennsylvania created a measurement dashboard to track the impact of the initiatives they had chosen to pursue in their local community. This dashboard captured data for their priority initiatives, including economic and commercial development: within these categories they track data on specific indicators, such as:

- Local purchasing as a % of total spend (Economic Development initiatives)
- Minority contracting: construction (Economic Development initiatives)
- Minority construction hiring (Economic Development initiatives)
- Participant numbers in Penn Home Ownership Services (University Circle Housing)

- Crime incidents (Neighbourhood services initiatives)

Their measurement dashboard tracks these indicators over time, showing progress with a red, amber or green rating and the proportion of increase or decrease.[xvii]

Perhaps the biggest challenge when it comes to selecting the right measurements is deciding upon how and where to draw the geographical boundaries of the work. A key message resounding from this research has been to focus on very specific local areas in order to have an impact. Many anchor organisations working at a city level focus on a small number – sometimes even one or two – zip codes as the focus of their work initially.

While measuring community impact is complex, especially when working at a place-based level with multiple city partners, many organisations interviewed as part of this research stressed the importance of setting ambitious targets. The view was that this work is complex, and as such it is something that many anchors, with their extensive expertise, are uniquely positioned to do. Setting targets may be imperfect, but many anchor organisations agreed that it was helpful to signal intent and aspiration. It also provided something that partners and community members could hold each other to account for.

Enabling factors: governance and co-ordination

Many anchor organisations have developed place-based partnerships with other organisations in the same town, city or region. These so called 'anchor collaboratives' share a common geography and collective objectives which are the basis of their collaboration. In many places this has led to new structures and governance arrangements which help the anchor collaboratives agree their objectives, deliver on them as a collective – place-based – system, collect data and track impact.

For example, in Cleveland the core anchor organisations working together in that city have established a collective governance structure which has taken inspiration from collective impact models of governance. They have a leadership group that convenes the CEOs and COOs of the anchor organisations, but much of the strategic planning is led by an Economic Inclusion Management Committee. Beneath this are a series of subcommittees that take forward work on each of the three themes that have structured the anchor's collective work: Buy Local, Hire Local and Live Local. The EIMC is a large group of 35 people, representing 15 organisations and is where the strategic planning and delivery of the anchor collaborative sits. Eight of these organisations are represented on the Executive Committee, which has 15 members. A further 66 people participate in the other working groups, bringing the total to 101 people from 25 organisations into the governance of GUCI. A Human Resources and IT (HR/IS) subgroup also brings together anchor organisations and has been meeting since 2012 to collaborate on local recruitment and workforce issues.
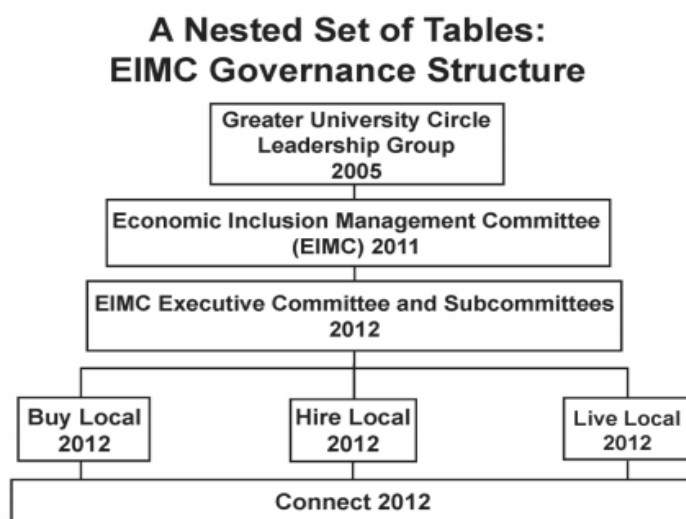

Figure 1: Governance Structure of the Greater University Circle Initiative in Cleveland[xviii]

Other anchor collaboratives have organised their governance differently, though there is consistently an executive level group which meet. Chicago's West Side United collaborative has an Executive Leadership Council and a Community Leadership Council, and their work is organised

around four impact areas: economic vitality, education, health and healthcare, and neighbourhood and physical environment.

The Cleveland and Chicago examples illustrate the main two ways that anchor collaboratives organise their governance: around impact area (e.g. education), or around strategy (e.g. recruitment).

The most important factors that enable robust and effective co-ordination among anchor collaboratives are:

- Clearly defined aims which are equally important to all anchor organisations
- A clearly defined population or geographical targets
- Baseline data from each organisation
- Senior sponsorship from the executive team in each organisation
- Delegated responsibility to a group that can oversee and report back on delivery

Perhaps most important of all is the ability of the partnership to achieve some quick wins to secure confidence in the investment they are making in the relationships with each other. This could be something as simple as capturing their individual baseline data and identifying common challenges or piloting one very small activity with a group of HR or Procurement leads.

Enabling factors: the role of philanthropy in community wealth building

Throughout this research philanthropic partners were mentioned as a key enabler of the anchor's efforts. Charitable trusts and foundations are working with anchor organisations in a huge range of ways, including:

Convening and facilitating in many towns and cities philanthropic partners have helped to convene anchor organisations together to think about what they can collectively do to benefit the local community. Anchor institutions in North America – particularly healthcare providers – can be competitors and the presence of a foundation as a neutral convener is helpful. In some cities, foundations have also employed staff who have acted as important co-ordinators for anchor collaboratives, providing vital administration capacity that one anchor on its own might struggle to justify. Some foundations have also funded peer learning and networking opportunities across anchor organisations to provide space for learning, reflection and collaboration. For example, the Atkinson Foundation in Toronto established and funded the Anchor TO network consisting of procurement leads from 18 public sector institutions in the city and has supported collaborative learning across this network for over three years.

Investors: as organisations with substantial funds, trusts and foundations have also been helpful financial partners to many anchor organisations in North America. They can often incentivise anchors to invest by themselves being the first money in to a new initiative, and some philanthropic organisations can take risks that the anchors can't. The Cleveland Foundation, for example, provided a combination of social investment and grant funding to help establish Evergreen Co-operatives in Cleveland.

As anchors themselves: of course, many place-based trusts and foundations will be anchor organisations themselves and may be among the biggest investors in the local economy. They may ask themselves what the local impact of their spending is, how to invest their endowments so they have greater impact for the local community, and what their role is in encouraging civic action and place-making.

Learning partners: trusts and foundations in North America have also played an important role in building the learning and evaluation of community wealth building approaches by commissioning research, brokering action learning networks and publishing evaluations of individual initiatives.

Encouraging sector wide transitions: some anchor organisations have focused on working with one sector, such as higher education, or health, to shift the practice of the anchors within that area. For example, the Robert Johnson Wood Foundation has funded and supported national programmes supporting health anchors, showing thought leadership and providing space and capacity for health organisations

Conclusion

The anchor organisations involved in this research showed a deep commitment to a new way of thinking about their role in the places they are based in. Despite being located in different towns and cities, from Toronto to New Orleans and Cleveland to Melbourne, they shared a number of the same strategies. They also shared many common reflections on the learning they had developed through their journeys.

For many of the individuals involved in this research, developing anchor strategies for their organisation was an opportunity to connect back office functions more closely to their mission and to align the sum total of all their organisational resources with this. It was work they found intrinsically motivating: one procurement manager in a hospital described this as the first time in a twenty-year career that he felt his work had been able to deliver on the core purpose of the organisation.

One common strand of learning from all the anchor organisations was the need to understand, at a very granular level, what the local economy looks like, and who within that is benefiting from, or excluded by, opportunities that the anchor organisations can provide. This insight should inform the focus of their anchor strategies, and for many anchor organisations the most important piece of learning was that the focus should be as specific as possible. This means some major hospitals are focused on increasing the wealth and opportunity of one or two zip codes or reducing labour market inequalities for one specific group of people. Without this focus, it is very easy to do a lot but not have a tangible impact.

The need for a clear governance arrangement to support the collective efforts of anchor organisations was also stressed in numerous interviews. The leadership of anchor organisations need to be active sponsors and supporters, but the people who often lead the implementation are more often the heads or directors of departments. When anchor collaboratives come together, their collective focus needs to be tightly defined, and resourcing needed to implement their vision appropriately scoped.

Many anchor organisations approached engaging the community on their plans as an afterthought, but those who did it early on felt reassured that the strategies and actions they had identified were meeting the needs of the communities they serviced, and had the effect of building in external accountability which could keep their work on track if a senior sponsor left, or if plans stalled.

For any anchor organisation wanting to become more intentional about their work, there are some common starting points which many of the anchor organisations involved in this research had gone through to begin their work.

- Leadership: in the vast majority of organisations involved in this research, senior leaders has either initiated the work, or been involved very early on. This was, in most cases, the CEO, but also the Chief Operating Officer or relevant Executive Directors who were responsible for the organisation's corporate functions.

- Defining what counts as 'local': one of the most important starting points for anchor organisations is to be very clear about what impact they want to have, and whether this is on people or place. If it's on place, it's very easy for the term 'local' to be used without defining specifically what this refers to. Many of the most mature anchor organisations in the U.S. have defined local down to a small number of zip codes. For anchor collaboratives where each organisation works across a different footprint it is essential that the collaborative achieves clarity over which geography they are focused on together.

- Identifying immediate opportunities for quick wins is another place to start thinking about what anchor strategies to pursue. There might be some contracts coming up for re-procurement that could be a useful starting point to engage with local suppliers, or a capital investment project which could be used as a hook to think about applying a number of anchor strategies on one project.

Perhaps most strikingly was the sense for almost all of the anchor organisations that they had been operating as an anchor for decades, and sometimes hundreds of years, but not fulfilled the potential impact they could have had on the community. The community engagement lead from Cleveland Clinic shared their experience:

> *''We've been here for almost 100 years and in all that time haven't thought that much about the impact we have on the local community''*

An awareness of the current and potential impact of their core operations, and a greater degree of intentionality about this impact was seen as a crucial part of the journey for all anchor organisations.

Megan Sandel from the Boston Medical Centre reflected that:

> *''This isn't always about new money. You're spending the money now but with no intentionality''.*

If there is one word which sums up this research it is that: intentionality. The considered and conscious way in which anchor organisations are deploying all their assets and resources towards their mission which has emerged as the cornerstone of international best practice, and which should be the starting point for any British anchor organisation hoping to learn from their experience.

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[xv] Source: interview with Raven DeVaughan, CASE.

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